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Indicators for monitoring the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared at the request of the Statistical Commission at its thirty-fourth session.[a] The report describes the activities of the United Nations Statistics Division in leading the inter-agency work for the preparation of statistics and analysis for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It also presents a review of data availability and problems for the compilation of Millennium Development Goals indicators, and describes the activities recently undertaken and planned by the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Millennium Development Goals Indicators, coordinated by the Division, for the improvement of data for the indicators. The Commission is invited to comment on priorities for further research and support of capacity-building in statistical programmes in fields covered by the indicators.

[a] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 4* (E/2003/24), chap. I.A.

* E/CN.3/2004/1.

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I. Introduction

1. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and its Statistics Division lead the preparation of statistics and analysis on the Millennium Development Goals for the Secretary-General's annual report on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (see A/57/270 and A/58/323).

2. This work is undertaken through the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Millennium Development Goals Indicators, which meets at least once a year to review methods, standards and available data for the agreed indicators, and reviews and analyses trends for each of the quantifiable goals and targets.

3. The programme to support the preparation of Millennium Development Goals country reports at the country level is coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The programme aims to assist countries in the preparation of national Millennium Development Goals reports and the review and adaptation of national goals, targets and indicators related to the Goals, through training and consultation between the United Nations country team — comprising United Nations agencies present in the country — and government officials. The United Nations Statistics Division collaborates closely with UNDP on the compilation and analysis of indicators, adherence to agreed definitions, and standards and data needs.

4. The Division also works closely with UNDP, the World Bank, other competent agencies and the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (PARIS 21) on the promotion and coordination of technical cooperation with countries to improve their ongoing statistical programmes, which provide the basic data for the Millennium Development Goals indicators.

II. Inter-agency work on monitoring progress

A. Background

5. In June 2003, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs submitted to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General statistics and analysis compiled by an inter-agency group for the 2003 report (see A/58/323). The analysis of trends presented in the report is based on global and regional aggregates for two benchmark years: 1990 and 2000 or the latest available year. Where trend data are not available, the analysis is based only on most recent estimates (see annex I). The full report is currently being revised and edited to be issued for wider dissemination as a United Nations publication.

6. As part of its coordinating role in the global monitoring of Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations Statistics Division also maintains a millennium indicators database, with country data series provided by the responsible agencies on the agreed Millennium Development Goals indicators and additional indicators provided as supplementary information for more in-depth analysis (see http://millenniumindicators.un.org).

B. Data quality and availability for Millennium Development Goals indicators

7. The development and application of standard statistical concepts and methods for national and international use in compiling data for the Millennium Development Goals indicators have been important preoccupations of Millennium Development Goals inter-agency and expert meetings and consultations.

8. In the 2003 report (A/58/323), there were no trend data or inadequate trend data for 16 of the indicators and problems of uncertainty for many others. A review of the availability of data for the 48 indicators at the regional and country levels is contained in annex I.

9. After three years of intensive discussion and experience shared among the participants in inter-agency expert group meetings on the indicators, there are still indicators for which standards and guidelines need more development and testing before the desirable level of reliability, interpretability and coverage can be reached. In a number of areas, often with impetus from the strong general interest in measuring progress in the Goals, there is already significant work well under way, with an agreed work plan and timetable. But in other areas, significant unresolved issues remain and more attention is needed. A review of the work in progress and needed for the improvement of data for the indicators is contained in annex II.

10. At its most recent meeting, the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Millennium Development Goals Indicators proposed to undertake collaborative work on areas in which work is most urgently needed, including:

(a) Producing harmonized, integrated guidelines on household income and consumption surveys to provide consistent, standardized measurement of poverty eradication for national and international purposes. The guidelines need to take into account the need for transparency and simplicity in the compilation and use of purchasing power parities (PPPs) in poverty comparisons; the need for more research on wide differences in national accounts and household survey measurement results on the relevant income and consumption aggregates; identification of gender differences; and the measurement of poverty among the elderly;

(b) Improving the framework for the assessment of gender equality through a review of the existing list of indicators and the development and proposal of new indicators;

(c) Improving the framework and selection of indicators on environment and improving national capacities to compile and analyse those indicators;

(d) Developing detailed guidelines for measuring slum populations and their characteristics, making full use of geographic information systems (GIS) technologies to present and link data geographically and relate the data to infrastructure in many fields of concern, such as education and health services, water and sanitation.

11. Proposals have already been made to form subgroups of agencies and organize work in 2004 in some of the above areas. The proposed subgroups would work under the overall mandate of the Inter-Agency Expert Group, with coordination by the United Nations Statistics Division. In particular:

(a) The United Nations Statistics Division, the World Bank, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) are planning joint work on poverty measurement issues;

(b) The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the ILO, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the United Nations Statistics Division and the Millennium Project will work on the development of indicators on gender equality;

(c) The United Nations Statistics Division and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) will work on the measurement of slum populations.

12. Concerning environment indicators, it was noted there is need for the development of an integrated set of indicators to analyse environmental sustainability and promote data development at the national level. The United Nations Statistics Division has initiated discussion with the concerned agencies to plan the necessary work.

13. Throughout the process, the involvement of country offices will be essential. Representatives of national statistical services are part of the inter-agency and expert consultations and provide partner agencies with views on what is needed at the national level in terms of data development and for improving the use of data in national policy-making and monitoring.

III. Monitoring the Millennium Development Goals in countries

14. An essential part of the monitoring exercise is represented by the compilation of indicators and the analysis of trends in Millennium Development Goals country reports. The United Nations Development Programme is the lead agency in this work.

15. The United Nations Statistics Division has supported UNDP in working on the technical implications of this work and contributed to the discussion on how to adapt the agreed Millennium Development Goals framework to national needs and circumstances. Countries have succeeded to a great extent in using the Goals, targets and indicators, adapting them to their national circumstances and policy priorities.

16. To provide countries with a basic reference guide, an inter-agency working group of the United Nations Development Group, co-chaired by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Statistics Division and UNDP, directed the preparation of the handbook *Indicators for Monitoring the Millennium Development Goals: Definitions, Rationale, Concepts and Sources*.[1] The handbook provides guidance on the definitions, rationale, concepts and sources of the data for each of the indicators that are being used to monitor the Goals and targets.

17. A fundamental component in the process of adapting the Millennium Development Goals to country priorities has been the disaggregation of data by geographical areas and by population groups — an aspect also highlighted in the handbook.

18. The United Nations Statistics Division has also been actively involved in many of the training activities undertaken by the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy and UNDP country and regional offices on the preparation of Millennium Development Goals country reports. That participation has helped national statistical services to become more involved in the participation of country reports. A review of the work completed and planned is contained in annex III. One Millennium Development Goals training workshop is planned for a group of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and south-eastern European countries in early 2004. The workshop will aim to ensure consistency in development agenda and monitoring indicators for the Millennium Development Goals and for the social inclusion process in new and candidate countries of the European Union.

19. A more recent development in the work undertaken at the national level has been the preparation of national reports by donor countries, focusing on their progress in meeting the requirements for the realization of a global partnership between developed and developing countries to successfully move towards the Millennium Development Goals. One country — Denmark — has finalized its report and several more countries are working on reports. A draft outline for donor reporting on Goal 8 has been prepared by a group of OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members, with the participation of the United Nations (the outline was presented at a meeting of the DAC Task Force on Donor Practices held in Paris on 26 and 27 November 2003).

IV. Statistical capacity-building

20. The Millennium Development Goals monitoring framework has become widely accepted and has proved instrumental in raising awareness of global and national development priorities. The impetus generated by the interest in advocating for policy reforms and mobilizing resources for the Goals has also often resulted in an increased attention and demand for statistics in countries.

21. Improved statistics are the necessary basis both for producing the indicators to monitor progress towards the Goals and for informing the necessary policies to bring about changes to successfully move towards the agreed targets.

22. Building statistical capacity in countries and improving international agencies' statistical work and coordination are fundamental components of the work to achieve the goals of poverty eradication and development.

23. Work is under way and has been planned in a number of areas. For example, a training workshop was conducted for African countries in Nairobi in September 2003. The workshop brought together national statisticians from 29 francophone and anglophone countries to share their experience in preparing Millennium Development Goals indicators and the use of various national sources. Topics covered included definitions; methods of computation; potential problems with sources; the use of alternative sources and related implications and methods of interpretation; and analysis and dissemination of national Millennium Development Goals indicators.

24. A training workshop for countries of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) region will be held in Beirut in February 2004. The training

will aim to strengthen national capacity to prepare statistics, indicators and trend analysis for national Millennium Development Goals monitoring.

25. Other important initiatives for the improvement of statistical capacity in countries include the work of the PARIS 21 task team on improving statistical support for monitoring development goals. The team has scheduled six country case studies and is continuing its work on national and international compilation issues and household survey issues with a number of partners (see E/CN.3/2004/25).

26. Another important initiative is the new global partnership Health Metrics Network for the improvement of health information systems. The Network is planning to undertake a variety of programmes to promote countries' and subnational health information systems.[2]

Notes

[1] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.XVII.18; available at http://millenniumindicators.un.org, under "Key documents".

[2] See www.who.int/entity/mip/2003/other_documents/en/health_metrics-boerma.pdf (accessed on 17 December 2003).

Annex I

Status of reporting on regional trends in monitoring the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, 2003*

Goal 1
Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Poverty
(World Bank)

1. **Population below $1 PPP per day**

New regional estimates based on an updated database were provided, covering 1990 and 1999; new estimates will be provided in spring 2004.

Data for 94 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

2. **Poverty gap ratio**

3. **Share of poorest quintile in national consumption**

No new regional estimates were available in 2003.

2. Data for 94 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

3. Data for 124 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

4. **Children under five years of age who are underweight**
(UNICEF)

New regional estimates based on an updated database were provided covering 1990 and 2000.

Data for 140 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

5. **Population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption**
(FAO)

New regional estimates were provided covering 1990/92-1998/2000; new estimates will be provided in spring 2004.

Data for 116 countries; 91 countries with more than two data points.

* Data is organized under the eight Goals and 48 indicators (see A/58/323, annex).

Goal 2
Achieve universal primary education

6. Net enrolment ratio in primary education
(UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank)

New regional estimates were provided, based on an updated database, for 1990/91, 1998/99 and 2000/01.

Data for 175 countries; 175 countries with more than two data points.

7. Pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5
(UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank)

Regional estimates not available.

Data for 108 countries; 108 countries with more than two data points.

8. Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds
(UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank)

New regional estimates were provided covering 1990 and 2000.

Data for 138 countries; 138 countries with more than two data points.

Goal 3
Promote gender equality and empower women

9. Ratio of boys to girls in primary, secondary and tertiary education
(UNESCO, Division for the Advancement of Women, UNIFEM)

For the primary level, new regional estimates were provided, based on an updated database, for 1990/91 and 2000/01.

No new regional estimates were available for secondary or tertiary levels.

Primary: data for 197 countries; 183 countries with more than two data points.

Secondary: data for 162 countries; 136 countries with more than two data points.

Tertiary: data for 135 countries; 105 countries with more than two data points.

10. Ratio of literate women to men, 15-24 year-olds
(UNESCO, Division for the Advancement of Women, UNIFEM)

New regional estimates were provided covering 1990 and 2000.

Data for 138 countries; 138 countries with more than two data points.

11. Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector
(ILO, Division for the Advancement of Women, UNIFEM)

New regional estimates were provided covering 1990 and 2001, based on an updated database using the ILO regional classification.

Data for 188 countries; 131 countries with more than two data points.

12. **Seats held by women in national parliaments**
(IPU, Division for the Advancement of Women, UNIFEM)

New data were provided for the report, updated to March 2003; new data will be provided for the 2004 report.

Data for 188 countries; 174 countries with more than two data points.

Goal 4
Reduce child mortality

13. **Under-five mortality rate**
(UNICEF, WHO, United Nations Population Division)

Regional estimates updated on the basis of a few new country data were provided covering 1990 and 2000.

Data for 193 countries; 191 countries with more than two data points.

14. **Infant mortality rate**
(UNICEF, WHO, United Nations Population Division)

No new regional estimates available.

Data for 193 countries; 191 countries with more than two data points.

15. **1-year-old children immunized against measles**
(UNICEF, WHO)

New regional estimates based on an updated database were provided covering 1990 and 2001.

Data for 174 countries; 170 countries with more than two data points.

Goal 5
Improve maternal health

16. **Maternal mortality ratio**
(UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA)

New regional estimates were provided covering the year 2000; no regional trend data available.

Data for 183 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

17. **Birth attended by a skilled attendant**
(UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA)

New regional estimates based on an updated database were provided covering 1990 and 2000.

Data for 157 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

Goal 6
Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

18. Adults aged 15-49 living with HIV/AIDS, both sexes (UNAIDS, WHO)

Prevalence in 15-24-year-old pregnant women: new data for selected countries were provided for the 2003 report; no new regional estimates available.

Prevalence in 15-49-year-old adults: new regional estimates were provided covering 2002, both sexes; no trend estimates available.

Data for 20 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

19. Condom use

No new regional estimates are available.

Data for 145 countries; 74 countries with more than two data points.

19 (a) Women aged 15-24 reporting condom use during sexual intercourse with a non-regular partner in the past 12 months (UNICEF, UNAIDS, WHO, UNFPA)

Estimates only available for sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and south-central Asia, for one data point in the period 1996-2001.

Data for 48 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

19 (b) Population aged 15-24 with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS (UNICEF, UNAIDS, WHO, UNFPA)

The indicator consists of two components:

(i) Percentage of women and men aged 15-24 who know that a person can protect her/himself from HIV infection by consistent condom use;

(ii) Percentage of women and men aged 15-24 who know that a healthy-looking person can transmit HIV.

Regional estimates are available for sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and south-central and south-eastern Asia, covering one data point in the period 1996-2001.

Data for the first component of the indicator are available for 68 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

Data for the second component of the indicator are available for 78 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

20. Ratio of school attendance of orphans to school attendance of non-orphans (UNICEF, WHO, UNAIDS)

Regional estimate is available for Africa only, for one data point in the period 1996-2001.

Data for 44 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

21. Deaths associated with malaria
(WHO, UNICEF)

No new regional estimates were available for the 2003 report.

Death: data for 191 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

Prevalence: data for 109 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

22. Population in malaria risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures
(UNICEF, WHO)

Data are available for selected African countries only (two indicators); no trend estimates available.

Prevention: data for 35 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

Treatment: data for 35 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

23. Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis
(WHO)

New regional estimates based on an updated database were provided for 2001; figures presented in 2003 report are United Nations Statistics Division calculation of regional aggregates, based on country data provided by WHO; no trend estimates available.

Death: data for 191 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

Prevalence: data for 191 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

24. Tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short course
(WHO)

Global estimates based on an updated database were provided for 1995 and 2000 (two indicators).

Detected: data for 183 countries; 162 countries with more than two data points.

Treated: data for 166 countries; 155 countries with more than two data points.

Goal 7
Ensure environmental sustainability

25. Proportion of land area covered by forest
(FAO)

No new regional estimates were provided for the 2003 report.

Data for 198 countries; 198 countries with more than two data points.

26. **Area protected to maintain biological diversity**
(UNEP)

New regional estimates and trends provided for 1990 and 2003.

Data for 198 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

27. **Energy use**
(IEA, World Bank, United Nations Statistics Division)

New regional estimates and trends provided for 1990 and 2000.

Data for 122 countries; 122 countries with more than two data points.

28. **Carbon dioxide emissions and consumption of ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)**
(United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNEP, United Nations Statistics Division)

New world estimates provided for 1990 and 1999 for carbon dioxide and for 1986-2001 for CFCs.

Carbon dioxide: data for 210 countries; 207 countries with more than two data points.

CFCs: data for 156 countries; 155 countries with more than two data points.

29. **Population using solid fuels**

No new regional estimates were available for the 2003 report.

Data for 0 countries; 0 countries with more than two data points.

30. **Sustainable access to an improved water source**
(WHO, UNICEF)

No new regional estimates were available for the 2003 report.

Data for 167 countries; 167 countries with more than two data points.

31. **Access to improved sanitation**
(WHO, UNICEF)

No new regional estimates were available for the 2003 report.

Data for 162 countries; 162 countries with more than two data points.

32. **Households with access to secure tenure**

New regional estimates provided for 2001; trend estimates not available.

Country data not available.

Goal 8
Develop a global partnership for development

ODA
(OECD)

33. Net ODA, total and to least developed countries

2002 figures were provided for the 2003 report.

Total: data for 22 countries; 22 countries with more than two data points.

Least developed countries: data for 22 countries; 22 countries with more than two data points.

34. Bilateral, sector-allocable ODA of OECD/DAC donors to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation)

2000-2001 figures were provided for the 2003 report.

Data for 21 countries; 21 countries with more than two data points.

35. Untied bilateral ODA of OECD/DAC donors

2001 figures were provided for the 2003 report.

Data for 21 countries; 20 countries with more than two data points.

36. ODA received by landlocked countries

2001 figures were provided for the 2003 report.

Data for 29 countries; 29 countries with more than two data points.

37. ODA received by small island developing States

2001 figures were provided for the 2003 report.

Data for 37 countries; 37 countries with more than two data points.

Market access
(WTO, UNCTAD)

38. Developed country imports from developing countries admitted free of duty

2001 figures were provided for the 2003 report.

Data for developing regions and least developed countries aggregates only, for 1996, 2000 and 2001.

39. Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products, textiles and clothing from developing countries

2001 figures were provided for the 2003 report.

Data for developing regions and least developed countries aggregates only, for 1996, 2000 and 2001.

Agricultural support and trade capacity (OECD)

40. Support to domestic agriculture by developed countries

2002 figures were provided for the 2003 report.

Data for 16 countries; 16 countries with more than two data points.

41. ODA to build trade capacity

Data for world and region aggregates only from 2001 were provided for the 2003 report.

No country data available.

42. Countries that have reached their HIPC decision point and completion point

43. Debt relief committed under HIPC initiative

44. Debt service in relation to exports of goods and services of low- and middle-income countries (IMF, World Bank)

Data by country and world presented in the report were updated as of July 2003.

45. Unemployment rate of 15-24 year-olds (ILO)

Regional estimates for 1995 and 1999 were provided.

Data for 115 countries; 115 countries with two data points.

46. Population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis (WHO)

No new regional estimates were available for the 2003 report.

Data for 178 countries; 178 countries with more than two data points.

47. Telephone lines and cellular phones (ITU)

Updated regional estimates for 2002 were provided for the 2003 report.

Data for 217 countries; 217 countries with more than two data points.

48. Personal computers and Internet users (ITU)

Updated regional estimates for 2002 were provided for the 2003 report.

Computers: data for 168 countries; 168 countries with more than two data points.

Internet: data for 208 countries; 208 countries with more than two data points.

Annex II

Improving the quality of data for Millennium Development Goals indicators

1. The Inter-Agency Expert Group on Millennium Development Goals Indicators discussed this question on the basis of a note prepared by the United Nations Statistics Division reviewing the status of development of international standards and guidelines and suggesting priority areas for work in the short, medium and long-term future.

2. Participants proposed several clarifications and additions to the note and endorsed the proposals as a general guide to further work. The note, as revised to take the meeting comments and suggestions into account, is set out below.

Development of standards and guidelines

3. The development and application of standard statistical concepts and methods for national and international use in statistical series used in relation to the Millennium Development Goals indicators have been important preoccupations of inter-agency and expert meetings and consultations since the preparation of a list of indicators for monitoring the Goals was first discussed.

4. In many areas, long-standing international recommendations have found continuing acceptance and application in data-collection and compilation programmes. At the international level, such recommendations are essential to the comparability and quality of the selected series; at the national level, they serve as indispensable, respected and valued guidelines for the development of national data-collection programmes, with appropriate adaptation to national needs, circumstances and priorities.

5. The reliability, acceptance and value of data series can to an important extent be judged by the quality of and extent of experience with the standards and methods used in their collection.

6. After three years of intensive discussion and experience shared among participants in inter-agency and expert meetings on the Millennium Development Goals indicators, it is reasonable to assess and inventory areas where standards and guidelines need more development and testing before the relevant indicators can reach the desirable level of reliability, interpretability and coverage.

7. In a number of areas, often with impetus from the strong general interest in measuring progress in the Millennium Development Goals, there is already significant work under way, with a workplan and timetable well in hand. In other areas, significant unresolved issues remain and more attention is needed. In some, necessary developmental work has hardly begun. A review of the work that is either in progress or is required to develop the indicators is set out below. It identifies gaps and recommends for further consideration elements for a work programme, as endorsed by the Inter-Agency Expert Group. The review is organized under abbreviated headings corresponding to the 48 indicators (and one proposed additional indicator) being developed to measure implementation of the Goals (see A/58/323, annex).

1-3. Poverty and income distribution

Very considerable work has been done over a long period in this field. However, integrated survey guidelines and measurement standards consistent with national accounting and suitable for developing countries are lacking. Given the research and experience that have been accomplished in this field, this is a relatively short-term objective.

Countries need to be more involved in international estimates of extreme poverty based on PPPs as this measure is so widely used and quoted. Using PPPs, especially in this context, is an area where many developing countries have little experience or training.

Problems have also been identified in reconciling income and consumption data from household surveys and national accounting. This is important to ensure consistency between poverty analysis and macroeconomic aggregates, which are central to national development planning and international monitoring. New research and analysis are required, but there has been sufficient preliminary work to ensure that a project can be organized relatively quickly for results in the medium term.

The need for gender analysis of income and consumption and of intra-household distribution is also well established but evidently requires a major long-term effort, including the development of methodologies to make better use of existing data sources, such as household and time-use surveys. Similarly, there is a need to incorporate into the analysis of poverty the age dimension, given the predominance of elderly people among the poor, especially in some regions.

4. Underweight children

Extensive work is ongoing and well documented.

5. Dietary energy consumption

Extensive work is ongoing, including special efforts to increase the role of national statistical services in improving and disseminating these data. Work undertaken by FAO in this area is very encouraging and could lead to significant data improvements at the national and international levels in the medium term.

6. Net enrolment ratio in primary education

Ongoing research and development should systematically address comparability of methods and results between household survey and administrative sources.

7. Completion of primary education

Considerable work has been launched in this area relatively recently, but new methods and standards have not yet been thoroughly tested and agreed.

8 and 10. Literacy

Work is ongoing on more functional definitions of literacy, and new guidelines and recommendations could be developed in the medium term.

9. Gender parity index at three levels of schooling

The use of ratios in this field is still relatively new, and their stability and reliability should be further evaluated.

11. Women's work

Considerable preliminary research has been done on proposed additional indicators, and specific proposals have been made for further research and development. Relatively early adoption and application of new methods and guidelines is feasible.

12. Women in parliament

Good preliminary research has been done here, with specific proposals for research and development, and relatively early adoption and application of new methods and guidelines is feasible. Development of complementary indicators of empowerment has been extensively discussed and a programme is now needed to move towards more formal proposals and guidelines.

Proposed additional indicator on domestic violence under Goal 3

Violence against women — whether in the home, schools, workplace, community or other settings — constitutes a critical barrier to women's empowerment and gender equality. An indicator on domestic violence is being developed to be proposed for inclusion under Goal 3, pursuant to the Millennium Declaration, paragraph 25.

13-15. Child mortality/immunization

Extensive development and review of concepts and methods is ongoing here, and innovative indicators to complement the Millennium Development Goals indicators could be developed for wide use within a few years, including coverage of desirable interventions.

16 and 17. Maternal health

These indicators have been extensively researched and work on reliable trend measurement is ongoing. Some complementary indicators of desirable interventions and their implementation are available and should be recommended for use at the country level. Several agencies felt that an indicator to measure the contraceptive prevalence rate should be included under maternal health and that the decision not to include indicators of reproductive health should be reconsidered.

18. HIV/AIDS

Extensive development and review of concepts and methods is ongoing here. Successful ways of expanding coverage of the data are still at a relatively early stage, however, and measures of trends need a considerable development effort and agreement.

19 and 20. HIV/AIDS knowledge and prevention/orphans

Extensive further development and review of concepts and methods are ongoing and much remains to be done. Successful ways of expanding coverage of the data are at

a very early stage, and measures of trends also need a considerable development effort and agreement.

21 and 22. Malaria

Measurement of successful prevention and treatment methods is being extensively researched and tested but wide application requires at least two more years of work. Measurement of trends in prevalence and deaths still requires considerably more work.

23 and 24. Tuberculosis

The DOTS methodology has found good success in application so far and its further development and application are ongoing.

25-32. Environment/water and sanitation/housing

Development and review of concepts and methods is ongoing for most of the environment-related indicators in the Millennium Development Goals list. However, standards and guidelines for data collection at the country level are not well developed and there is insufficient collaboration between national statistical services and policy analysts in this field. Work is needed to develop a more coherent and integrated framework for analysis and to produce specific recommendations that national agencies can use for the development of environment-related statistics and indicators.

25. Forest cover

This indicator is relatively well established. Work on extensive development of the underlying database and conceptual framework is recommended. The consultation process with countries is being strengthened as measurement technologies improve and the political importance of the indicator increases.

26. Protected areas

The long-term collection of data on protected areas has produced a data set which is currently finding wide acceptance as an indicator for the environment. There has been also constant improvement in both the World Database on Protected Areas and in data-collection procedures at the country level. Developing a conceptual framework for the indicator within a broader environmental accounting framework is recommended as a medium-term objective.

27. Energy use

International standards in this field need to be updated, harmonized and applied more rigorously.

28. Carbon dioxide and CFCs

International standards for statistical purposes in this field need to be updated and harmonized more rigorously, and the data-compilation process at the national level brought under the general responsibility of statistical services cooperating with environmental offices.

29. Solid fuels

This indicator is still at a very early stage of development, standardization and application.

30 and 31. Water and sanitation

Extensive development and review of concepts and methods is ongoing here, with considerable recent progress and agreement on measurement guidelines and standards. This work should continue, with a special effort to ensure sufficiently high data quality to successfully monitor medium-term trends.

32. Slums

Extensive preliminary research and development of this indicator have recently begun to yield good results. Considerable further development and review of concepts, methods and collection programmes are still needed. Successful ways of expanding coverage of the data are at a very early stage, and measures of trends also need a considerable development effort and agreement.

33-37 and 41. Official development assistance

These indicators are now being scrutinized regularly with a view to improving detail and relevance to overall aid objectives. This work should continue and could also involve developing country participants with a view to a better assessment of aid impact by recipient countries. Attention should also be given to coverage of non-OECD/DAC donors.

38-40. Trade and agricultural support

These indicators are now being scrutinized regularly with a view to providing country and commodity detail. This work should continue and could also involve developing country participants.

42-44. Debt

The indicators on the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative are straightforward. Debt sustainability in both HIPC and non-HIPC countries is undergoing methodological study and measurement standards are being clarified and need to be reflected in these indicators in the future.

45. Youth unemployment

The ILO is organizing ongoing work to develop new and more relevant indicators and targets in this field.

46. Access to drugs

Considerably more development and research on appropriate and practical concepts and guidelines are needed for the medium term.

47 and 48. Information and communications technologies

Work has been started on development of new data and indicator proposals in connection with the World Summit on the Information Society, and a new research and development programme for statistics in this field is expected to be launched to follow up the Summit programme of action.

Annex III

Meeting workplan for Millennium Development Goals indicators, 2003-2005

The meeting proposals set out below are based on the recommendations of the Inter-Agency Expert Group on the Millennium Development Goals Indicators. They provide a working schedule geared to the completion of the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on monitoring the implementation of the Millennium Declaration (development section) in the summer of 2005.

Inter-Agency Expert Group

Third week of March 2004, New York

September/October 2004, Geneva

Late March 2005, New York

At its fourth meeting, held recently in Geneva, the Inter-Agency Expert Group made several suggestions for the agenda of the March 2004 meeting with a view to starting concrete preparations for the 2005 report and completing basic inputs for the 2004 report. A draft agenda was to be proposed and circulated for comments in December 2003.

Regional meetings

At least one meeting should be held in each region of experts and statisticians on Millennium Development Goals indicators, in cooperation with the United Nations Statistics Division. Several meetings have been held, are in preparation or are being planned, as described below.

Africa

A workshop for the countries of sub-Saharan Africa was held from 22 to 26 November 2003 in Nairobi, in cooperation with UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA. Since those countries are the most critical to meeting the Millennium Development Goals, a follow-up meeting should be held in the first quarter of 2005.

A Millennium Development Goals indicators meeting is to be organized by the United Nations Statistical Division and the Economic Community of West African States in 2004-2005.

Western Asia

An ESCWA/United Nations Statistics Division workshop for the ESCWA countries is to be held from 9 to 13 February 2004.

Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is working with the secretariat of the South Pacific Commission to organize a workshop in the Pacific region in 2004.

Europe

A workshop was organized by UNDP for the EU accession countries in Vilnius in January 2003, with inputs from the United Nations Statistics Division.

A workshop was organized by ECE/UNDP in Bratislava in May 2003 for CIS and south-eastern Europe, on Millennium Development Goals reporting and reporting on social inclusion.

A workshop organized jointly by UNDP and the United Nations Statistics Division is also planned for 23-25 February 2004 for new and candidate EU countries on Millennium Development Goals and social inclusion and statistical requirements for monitoring. ECE will also participate. The meeting will also discuss the preparation of reports on Goal 8 by new donor countries.

There is also keen interest in the ECE region on the part of both the eastern European/CIS countries and the other ECE countries on monitoring implementation under the so-called Goal 8 indicators, and a proposal could be prepared shortly.

Latin America and the Caribbean

No plans are known to the United Nations Statistics Division.

Expert meetings on the development of international standards, guidelines and handbooks relating to statistics for the Millennium Development Goals indicators

The following areas in which work should be organized in 2004-2005 were identified:

(a) Review in depth the suggestions of the report entitled "Aggregation of national data to regional and global estimates of Millennium Development Goals indicators", prepared by Tim Holt as a consultant to the ILO, and prepare a set or recommendations and list of concrete steps to be endorsed and undertaken by the Inter-Agency Expert Group;

(b) Produce harmonized, integrated guidelines on household income and consumption surveys to provide a consistent standardized measurement of poverty eradication for national and international uses. The guidelines need to take into account the need for transparency and simplicity in the compilation and use of PPPs in poverty comparisons; the need for more research on wide differences in national accounts and household survey measurement results on the relevant income and consumption aggregates; identification of gender differences; and measurement of poverty among the elderly;

(c) Improve the framework for the assessment of gender equality through a review of the existing list of indicators and the development and proposal of new indicators;

(d) Improve the framework and selection of indicators on environment and improve national capacities to compile those indicators;

(e) Develop a full set of guidelines for measuring slum populations and their characteristics, making full use of GIS technologies to present and link data geographically and relate the data to infrastructure in many fields of concern, such as education and health services, water and sanitation.

Proposals have already been made to form subgroups of agencies and organize work in 2004 in some of the above areas. The subgroups will work under the overall mandate of the inter-agency group, coordinated by the United Nations Statistics Division. In particular:

(a) The ILO, the World Bank and the United Nations Statistics Division will initiate work on Tim Holt's recommendations based on responses to a letter from the ILO requesting comments and suggestions for work before the end of 2003;

(b) The United Nations Statistics Division, with the World Bank and FAO, will initiate work on the poverty measurement issues, with UNCTAD, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the International Food Policy Research Institute and the ILO to be involved. FAO and ISTAT (Italy) have suggested they might host a meeting;

(c) UNESCO, the ILO, IPU, WHO, UNIFEM, the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP, ECE, the United Nations Statistics Division and the Millennium Project will work on the development of indicators on gender equality;

(d) The United Nations Statistics Division and UN-Habitat will work on the measurement of slum populations;

(e) On environment indicators, the invited expert to the fourth meeting of the Inter-Agency Expert Group, held in November 2003, made suggestions for the development of an integrated set of statistics for the analysis of environmental sustainability and for data development at the national level. FAO and UNEP could be the agencies initiating action to form the subgroup, possibly in cooperation with Statistics Canada and the Canadian International Development Agency or ISTAT and Italy;

(f) UNHCR is considering organizing and hosting a meeting on refugees and displaced populations and on populations in countries affected by such crises as conflict or famine;

(g) The United Nations Statistics Division poverty statistics project is organizing regional meetings on poverty statistics in the ECLAC, ECOWAS and ESCAP regions, as well as a general expert group meeting on the planned poverty statistics handbook in 2005.

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Activities not classified by field: indicators

Report of the Advisory Committee on Indicators

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its thirty-fourth session,** the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Statistical Commission the report of the Advisory Committee on Indicators. The Commission may wish to endorse the recommendations of the Committee, and may also wish to invite the Committee to continue its review of indicators relating to recent conferences and special General Assembly sessions, in particular in the areas of HIV/AIDS and information and communication technology.

* E/CN.3/2004/1.

** See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2003, Supplement No. 4* (E/2003/24), chap. V, para. 4 (d).

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Progress made in connection with the conference indicators

Report of the Advisory Committee on Indicators

I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council and the Statistical Commission have been engaged in a discussion on how to measure progress in the implementation of the outcomes of all United Nations conferences in the economic, social and related fields. The Friends of the Chair Advisory Group was asked to elaborate recommendations for a basic list of indicators for conference follow-up and to make proposals for a mechanism of statistical review for future indicators. In response to the request for a limited list of conference indicators, the expert group elaborated an indicator framework containing three priority tiers, each with approximately 40 statistical indicators. The expert group recognized that the proposed framework must be kept under review to allow, for instance, further development in response to emerging needs with respect to future summits and major conferences.

2. The Commission therefore established the Advisory Committee on Indicators (the 13 members are from Australia, Brazil, China, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Italy, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Norway, Palestine, South Africa, United Kingdom), the main task of which is to periodically update the indicator framework provided in the Friends of the Chair report. Many (32) of the indicators for the Millennium Development Goals corresponded to the high-priority indicators proposed and were included in the three-tier framework. However, the statistical experts expressed some reservations regarding conceptual clarity or the currently insufficient methodological development of a few selected indicators, which often explained the serious lack of data for many countries. The Commission asked the Committee to focus its particular attention on the improvement of the metadata[1] for the millennium indicators as well as to rationalize those indicators with a view to ensuring their comparability and transparency.

II. Technical review of indicator sets

3. In conformity with the recommendations of the Commission at its thirty-fourth session, the main tasks of the Committee on Indicators can be divided in the following three groups:

(a) Harmonizing the existing framework with the indicators used to monitor progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, paying particular attention to indicators to monitor the implementation of goal 8 "develop global partnership for development";

(b) Further prioritization of the indicators, especially in the top tiers, according to criteria such as "availability of good metadata", "data availability" or "reliability and comparability of data";

(c) Updating the framework by incorporating new indicators in response to recent and future United Nations conferences and summits.

4. In its current stage of work, the Committee considered the task identified in paragraph 3 (a) above to be the most essential. The Committee undertook the task of harmonizing the Friends of the Chair and Goal indicators by corresponding the items incorporated and finding solutions for cases where there were divergences. The Committee also surveyed the data availability. The findings of the present report are based on the comments and experience of Australia, Brazil, Hungary, India, Kazakhstan, Norway, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

5. All but six Millennium Development Goal indicators were incorporated in the Friends of the Chair framework. At the first stage, the Committee tried to match the existing millennium indicators and the Friends of the Chair indicators, and except for 16 cases the two sets of indicators reached full compliance. (The complete list of indicators and comparisons are available as a background document.) For those items where there are divergences, the Committee came up with the following suggestions.

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
11	Malaria mortality rate (T2)	Prevalence and *death rates* associated with malaria (G6/T8/I21)

6. The Committee recognizes that the indicators on malaria mortality should ideally cover all age groups. However, since children under five constitute well above 80 per cent of global mortality deaths,[2] monitoring and policy interventions focus on this particular group of the population.

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
15	HIV/AIDS prevalence rate ages 15-24 by sex (T1)	HIV/AIDS prevalence among 15-to-24-year-old pregnant women[3] (G6/T7/I18)

7. The Committee could not come to a common decision since accurate estimates on the prevalence of HIV/AIDS can hardly be obtained. A substantial number of infected persons are usually unwilling to reveal their status; in addition, estimates of prevalence rates are typically political in many countries. Some experts who prefer the Friends of the Chair indicator stress the advantage of including males, as they can be major carrier of HIV/AIDS. Other experts who prefer the Millennium Development Goal indicator suggest defining the indicator more precisely to focus on pregnant women visiting prenatal clinics or hospitals.

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
18	Malaria morbidity rate (T3)	*Prevalence* and death rates associated with malaria (G6/T8/I21) [Prevalence refers to all age groups and death rates refer to children under 5]

8. The Committee suggests tagging the indicator to all ages.[4]

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
19	Malaria treatment (T3)	Proportion of population in malaria risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures (G6/T8/I22)

9. To be more precise, the Committee proposes to rename the Friends of the Chair indicator according to the Millennium Development Goals denomination.

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
32	Proportion of population with access to *safe drinking water* (T1)	Proportion of population with sustainable access to an *improved water source*, urban and rural (G7/T10/I30)

10. Although the Friends of the Chair indicator may seem more objective and measurable, the two indicators in fact coincide since they both aim to measure the proportion of people with access to safe water. The difference is that the Millennium Development Goals indicator makes specific reference to the way data are collected.[4]

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
33	Proportion of population with access to *sanitary means of excreta disposal* (T1)	Proportion of population with access to *improved sanitation* by urban/rural (G7/T10/I31)

11. The two indicators coincide. The Millennium Development Goals definition is the one internationally agreed and used in surveys at the country level.[5]

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
37	Emissions of greenhouse gases (T1)	Carbon dioxide emissions (per capita); and consumption of ozone-depleting CFCs (ODP tons) (G7/T9/I28)

12. Since greenhouse gases are not specified enough and per capita data are more favourable the Committee prefers the Millennium Development Goals indicator.

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
38	Consumption of ozone-depleting substances (T2)	Carbon dioxide emissions (per capita); and consumption of ozone-depleting CFCs (ODP tons) (G7/T9/I28) (*Same as number 37 above*)

13. Since the Millennium Development Goals indicator is clearer and "ozone-depleting substances" are not specified, the Committee suggests using the Millennium Development Goals indicator.

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
51	Protected area as per cent of total area (T1)	Ratio of area protected to maintain biological diversity to surface area (G7/T9/I26)

14. The suggestion to adopt the name and definition of the Millennium Development Goals indicator is accepted by the Committee.

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
54	Energy use as per unit of GDP (T1)	Energy use (kg oil equivalent) per $1 GDP (PPP) (G7/T9/I27)

15. The suggestion to add PPP to the Friends of the Chair indicator is accepted by the Committee.

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
126	Adult literacy, by age and sex (T1)	Literacy rate of 15-24-year-olds, women, men, total (G2/T3/I8) Ratio of literate women to men of 15-to-24-year-olds (G2/T4/I10)

16. The Friends of the Chair indicator can be used with two age groups: 15-to-24-year-olds and 24-and-over.

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
132	Proportion of seats in national Government, including Parliament, held by women (T1)	Proportion of seats held by women in national Parliament (G3/T4/I12)

17. The Committee suggests using the Millennium Development Goals indicator, which is more precise.

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
138	Tenure type: percentage of households that own their dwellings and percentage of households that rent their dwellings (T3)	Proportion of households with access to secure tenure (G7/T11/I32)

18. The Friends of the Chair indicator is better structured and is recommended by the Committee, but "owners" and "renters" should be separated, which would make the interpretation much more flexible. Although discrepancies for indicators 134-137 are not addressed, several experts think that, together with indicator 138, they could cause problems. The Friends of the Chair indicators address households, while the Millennium Development Goals composite indicator is calculated at an aggregate level. Since the Millennium Development Goals indicator is rather complex, it is recommended that the Committee further investigate the work being carried out by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements on the development of this indicator and the current availability of survey data.

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
139	Main telephone lines per 1,000 population	Telephone lines *and cellular subscribers* per *100 population* (G8/T18/I47)

19. The Friends of the Chair indicator is preferred since it measures data per 1,000 population, although cellular subscribers per 1,000 population is proposed to be included separately.

No.	*Friends of the Chair indicators*	*Correspondent Millennium Development Goals indicators*
140	Internet subscribers per 1,000 population	Personal computers in use per 100 population and Internet users per 100 population (G8/T18/48)
141	Number of PCs per 1,000 population	Personal computers in use per 100 population and Internet users per 100 population (G8/T18/48)

20. No common decision has been reached, since some experts prefer subscribers, who are likely to be more reliable to measure than users, while others voted for the Millennium Development Goals indicator because the information it provides is more useful bearing in mind that an active Internet subscription can be used both by an individual and by a family or a household with more than one member, and one person can also have several active Internet subscriptions. In the case of personal

computers, the indicator on PCs in use would be more favourable but per 1,000 population, although the availability of that indicator is more limited.

21. During the technical review of the Friends of the Chair indicators, some other issues were raised to be considered. Indicators 30-31 (proportion of children under 1 immunized against measles and DPT) should be thought over since in some or most industrialized countries children are immunized at about 15 months and the proportion recorded when they are 2. Indicator 39 (ambient concentration of pollutants in urban areas) is vaguely defined, its international consistency is problematic and it is very resource demanding to establish a data-collection system. Indicators 89-90 require consideration to have them adjusted as well to address absolute resources; therefore, they could be changed to "government expenditure on health (a) as proportion of GDP and (b) per capita" and "government expenditure on education (a) as proportion of GDP and (b) per child in primary and secondary school age", while per capita and per child data could be given in terms of PPP.

III. Data availability

22. Based on the seven country reports provided by Committee members, experience shows that the developed countries are able to provide most Friends of the Chair indicators; therefore, the data availability of developing countries is of greater interest. For instance, South Africa (for the time being) is not able to provide 61 of the 123 Friends of the Chair indicators, which adds up to 50 per cent. Obviously, data in the first tier are missing to the least (26 per cent of first tier data) and data in the third tier to the highest (65 per cent of third tier data) extent. Kazakhstan cannot provide 38 (31 per cent) Friends of the Chair indicators, of which 7 (18 per cent) belongs to the first, 17 (40 per cent) to the third tier. The relatively large number of indicators not available in the first tier causes serious problems. Data availability should be surveyed at a wider level to get a more complex picture. This is one of the tasks of the next step.

23. Since international standards are available for almost all segments of statistics the improvement of metadata is probably not the solution for the progress in data availability. To ensure the comparability of data, all countries should apply the common standards, but in order to be able to develop the statistical systems of developing countries they need to develop the statistical infrastructure, to conduct surveys. Statistical capacity-building especially in developing countries is inevitable and a prompt issue to meet the range of needs for development indicators.

Notes

[1] See *Handbook on Indicators for Monitoring the Millennium Development Goals — Definitions, Rational, Concepts and Source* (United Nations publication, forthcoming).

[2] Malaria mortality among children 0-4 years in sub-Saharan Africa in the year 2002 was estimated at more than 900,000 deaths, out of a total of 1 million deaths worldwide, see "Monitoring report on millennium development trends 1990-2003".

[3] Although only the indicator on HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in 15-24-year-old pregnant women is listed among Millennium Development Goals indicators, HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the age group 15-24 is also an official Goal indicator recommended for use for the global monitoring as well as for monitoring the Goals at the country level. It should be noted that estimates of

HIV/AIDS prevalence rate for the whole population in this age group were not available for the 2003 report due to data problems.

[4] To date, malaria prevalence data are not available since estimates cannot be derived from reported cases (which largely underestimate the reality).

[5] In the absence of an operational definition on safe drinking water to be used in surveys, the World Health Organization/United Nations Children's Fund Joint Monitoring Programme on Water Supply and Sanitation introduced the term "Improved drinking water sources", which describes technology types that are likely to meet the criteria for yielding safe drinking water.

[6] The "Proportion of the population with access to improved sanitation" refers to the percentage of the population with access to facilities that hygienically separate human excreta from human, animal and insect contact.

[7] As with the Millennium Development Goals, for international comparisons only the single or lower house is considered in calculating the indicator.

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Activities not classified by field: statistical capacity-building

Report of the Steering Committee of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (PARIS 21)

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Statistical Commission a progress report prepared by the Steering Committee of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (PARIS 21). The report provides the Commission with a summary of the results of its independent evaluation as well as the outputs achieved from advocacy work, information-sharing, task team activities, and subregional/country workshops undertaken in calendar year 2003.

2. The Commission may wish:

(a) To note the progress of PARIS 21 to date;

(b) To comment on its future direction and forward programme for 2004-2006.

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I. Background

1. Despite national and international efforts to finance statistics over recent years, a majority of developing countries do not have systems that are capable of providing policy makers, the general public, and economic and social partners with the statistical data that they need in order to take sound policy, business, political and personal decisions. Typically, demand for statistics is weak — symptomatic of an embryonic statistical culture. National statistical systems are not demand-driven and are characterized by poor coordination among the different bodies producing statistics, by meagre national financing, and by the fact that vital international support is too often ad hoc or not attuned to the constraints imposed by the country's individual needs. The international community is, however, at a turning point in the history of statistical development. For the first time, statistical demand in countries is made explicit in their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. Statistics are necessary for the definition, the implementation and the evaluation of poverty reduction policies. On the international level, the Millennium Development Goals and their indicators provide a framework for statistical demand agreed by all countries. Increasing the capacity of systems to monitor the Goals will need to be considered one of the costs of their achievement. Statistical development has also been discussed at large international meetings, such as the International Conference on Financing for Development, held at Monterrey, Mexico, in March 2002.

2. In light of this situation, the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (PARIS 21) was launched at a meeting in Paris in November 1999 in response to an Economic and Social Council resolution on rationalizing and improving statistics and indicators. The founding institutions of the initiative are the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the European Commission. The first annual progress report of PARIS 21 was presented to the Statistical Commission on 8 March 2001 (see E/CN.3/2001/24).[1]

II. Work programme for 2003

A. Advocacy

3. Following the success of the English-language film entitled "Measuring the Change in World Poverty" which was developed by PARIS 21 in 2002, the PARIS 21 secretariat has begun compiling an archive of filmed interviews and presentations at each of its regional workshops. In addition, PARIS 21 has updated the "Why Statistics?" advocacy web site (www.paris21.org/htm/task/advocacy/homepage.html), which offers information on setting national statistical system priorities, data quality, and financing statistical activities.

B. Partnership and information exchange

Newsletter

4. The PARIS 21 newsletter is a means to report on international statistical activities and serves as a forum for dialogue among PARIS 21 consortium members and beyond. Features include articles advocating for the use of statistics in policy

decisions and reports on workshops and statistical activities. Two issues were produced and disseminated in 2003, one in March and one in December.

C. Task teams

5. PARIS 21 task teams bring together, under a volunteer convener, professionals interested in particular aspects of statistical capacity-building. Task team members include experts from international organizations, donor agencies, and developing and transition countries. The census task team — in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Statistics South Africa, the United States Bureau of the Census, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Department for International Development — organized an International Expert Group Seminar on Population Census Data Dissemination and Use in November 2003, in Pretoria. The rural and agricultural statistics task team prepared an interim regional project proposal for "Strengthening agricultural statistics for poverty reduction and food security in rural Africa", which was approved by the World Bank Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building in May 2003. The work programme for the improving statistical support for monitoring development goals task team included a set of country case studies undertaken to review country capacity, and an international study. At the Inter-agency and Expert Meeting on Millennium Development Goals Indicators held in Geneva in November 2003, the work plans of the country study teams were presented and reviewed by participants. For the international study, the team distributed a questionnaire to United Nations bodies with Millennium Development Goals indicators-related responsibilities, for the purpose of asking for changes and updates, collecting information on data-collection and data quality assurance/control processes, and obtaining information about plans for improvement. The team has also drafted terms of reference for a study aimed at reviewing the internationally sponsored household survey programme, particularly in relation to obtaining key indicator information.

D. Regional workshops

6. Regional workshops are the start of a process for improving the policy relevance of statistics by developing the dialogue between the key users of the statistical system and the managers of statistical production in developing and transition countries. Not only have these offered opportunities to network with and learn from neighbouring countries and the international community, but the partnerships with users and decision makers that are forged at the workshops lead to country-owned action plans which most country teams have continued to develop after the workshop is over. Typically, plans include actions for better use of data; promoting statistics; improving relations with the media, policy makers and users; developing dissemination and communications policies; conducting national stakeholders' workshops; investigating best practices in the region; and embarking on strategic statistical planning activities.

7. Since the last report to the Statistical Commission, PARIS 21 has held five regional workshops: (a) Central Africa Regional Workshop, December 2002, Yaoundé; (b) West Africa Regional Workshop I, January 2003, Dakar; (c) West Africa Regional Workshop II, March 2003, Abuja; (d) Central America Regional

Workshop, May 2003, San Salvador; and (e) Regional Forum for the Arab States, September 2003, Amman.

III. Evaluation

8. The PARIS 21 consortium has now been operating for three years. The initiative was independently evaluated by Oxford Policy Management, Ltd., in early 2003. The evaluators interviewed stakeholders in the North and South to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the initiative, reported on the lessons learned and proposed an updated strategy for the work of the initiative beyond 2003. The evaluation found that the PARIS 21 multi-agency task teams and regional workshop programme "had lasting effects in strengthening interactions with statisticians and policy makers" and that "these efforts have helped countries to respond to the needs for data" in connection with monitoring and developing policies for poverty reduction strategies and the Millennium Development Goals. The evaluation concluded that, in light of the promise the initiative had shown over the previous three years and the scale of the challenges ahead in improving the response of developing countries to growing data needs, PARIS 21 should continue for an additional three years. The PARIS 21 Steering Committee authorized this extension on 1 July 2003. The evaluation report can be viewed online at www.paris21.org/htm/workshop/sc0703/eval_final.pdf.

IV. Forward work programme (2004-2006)

9. In October 2003, the PARIS 21 Steering Committee reviewed and approved a work programme for the period from 2004 to 2006. The complete programme can be viewed online at www.paris21.org/htm/workshop/sc1003/P21_workprogramme.pdf. The success of the forward work programme will be measured along several axes. The initiative must show a demonstrable increase in the political and financial support for evidence-based policy-making and policy-relevant statistics. Poverty reduction and development policies must be evidence-based, and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers must include strategies for the development of the national statistical system.

A. National statistics development strategies

10. For 2004-2006 period, PARIS 21 will focus its efforts on encouraging all developing countries to establish a national statistics development strategy by mid-2006 and by 2010 to have naturally owned and produced data for all Millennium Development Goals indicators. Countries need to have an overall vision of the development of their national statistical system that will include national, regional and international needs; be part of the country development and poverty reduction policy; serve as a framework for international and bilateral assistance; include all parts of the data production units and address the issues related to the analysis and use of data; follow international standards including quality; and build on all past and existing activities and experiences. The five national statistics development strategy phases are: launching, road map, diagnosis and vision, strategies, and annual action plans. Each phase will be considered completed when its proposals

have received the formal approval of the appropriate authorities. The establishment of national statistics development strategy is by necessity a consultative process.

B. Advocacy

11. Based on interviews conducted at recent events, an advocacy film conveying a universal message on the importance of statistics will be produced at the end of 2004. Preparations are also under way to produce French-, Spanish- and Arabic-language films, focusing on the issues specific to the regions concerned.

C. Partnership and information exchange

Web site

12. PARIS 21 makes extensive use of its web site (www.paris21.org) as a communication and publicity tool. The site provides access to presentations and reports from workshops, task team outputs, details on upcoming meetings, and links to other relevant statistical sites. The site will be thoroughly redesigned in 2004 to include new features and an improved navigation and structure.

D. Task teams

1. Tools and methods

13. The tools and methods task team will develop and document tools related to the statistics needed for monitoring development policy. The first proposal under this team is entitled "Methods and tools for assessing governance through reporting and analysis" (METAGORA). The two-year pilot project METAGORA, which is expected to begin operations in early 2004, aims in particular at:

- Developing methods and producing pilot tools that will help obtain data and indicators on the basis of which beneficiaries can formulate or evaluate policies promoting democracy, human rights, and good governance.
- Identifying and assessing current work and initiatives undertaken in the North and the South with a view to measuring progress in the fields of democracy, human rights and governance and developing indicators in these fields.
- Providing guidelines on methodologies for measuring democracy, human rights, and good governance, training materials and databases, as well as an online repository of project findings, relevant materials, and exemplary practices.
- Proposing conceptual and operational frameworks for progressive adoption and use of internationally agreed governance indicators.

2. Better use of multisectoral data, especially for decentralized governance and local accountability

14. In October 2003, the PARIS 21 Steering Committee approved the creation of a new task team on "Better use of multisectoral data, especially for decentralized governance and local accountability" (InterSect). The overall goal of the InterSect

team is to contribute to greater poverty reduction by increasing the availability and relevance of development data to underpin better policy-making and monitoring of progress across sectors. The team will aim to:

- Foster a multisectoral approach to poverty reduction by making data more accessible across sectors especially at the local level.
- identify areas in which the multisectoral approach is particularly appropriate and review obstacles and success factors critical to building a multisectoral evidence base.
- Work with a number of countries where innovative plans/strategies for enhancing the production and use of multisectoral data at local level are being pursued.
- Assess and develop tools that will facilitate the sharing of information across sectors.
- Assess training requirements for statisticians with respect to their working within a multisectoral environment, and for policy makers and decision makers with respect to their making better use of data and analysis.

E. Reporting

15. The need to report regularly on the use of statistics for development and poverty reduction and on the status and trends of the national statistical systems in developing and transition countries is now more acute than ever. PARIS 21 through the Partnership Library of Statistical System Documentation (PARLISTAT), the Statistical Capacity Building Indicators (SCBI) programme, and in general the regional programmes will report on the use of statistics in policy-making and the development of country statistical systems.

1. Partnership Library of Statistical System Documentation (PARLISTAT)

16. Many activities related to the development of national statistical systems are carried out by various partners, but the information and relevant documentation are inadequately disseminated. While the collaboration and coordination among donors are in some ways satisfactory at the headquarters level, there is no systematic tool to support the coordination at the country level. During the period from 2004 to 2006, PARIS 21 will collect and make available the existing information on the development of statistical systems by country through PARLISTAT. By serving as a repository of documentation on national statistical systems, PARLISTAT will facilitate the work of both the countries and the donors supporting them and serve as a tool for the national and international statistical systems. This information will be made available in the form of a dynamic online database on the PARIS 21 web site.

2. Statistical Capacity Building Indicators

17. The Statistical Capacity Building Indicators final report and questionnaire, approved by the PARIS 21 Steering Committee in October 2002, has been widely recognized as a useful monitoring mechanism. During the period 2004-2006, PARIS 21 will review, expand and update the questionnaire, taking into account various comments and new needs; roll out systematically the questionnaire in countries

using appropriate processes such as peer reviews, in liaison with other relevant institutions, and in the framework of national statistics development strategies; and use the Statistical Capacity Building Indicators to report annually on the status of statistical systems.

3. Report on the use of statistics and the status of national statistical systems

18. PARIS 21 will pilot a report on the use of statistics for development and on the status and trends of the national statistical systems in developing and transition countries. The objective is to report on the use of statistics in addressing development issues concerning, inter alia, the Millennium Development Goals, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, governance, and the development of national and international statistical systems. The report will also highlight the evolution, constraints and best practices in statistical systems and will propose recommendations. The audience will be the key policy makers in the international community and in developing countries.

F. Regional workshops

19. During the period 2004-2006, regional workshops will help track progress with respect to national statistics development strategies, find solutions to the obstacles that countries may have encountered, and enable the more advanced countries to share their experiences of follow-up and development of national statistics development strategies with countries considering the possibility of taking similar steps. Regional workshops are planned for each region of the world before the end of 2006. These workshops will constitute a second round for regions such as Africa, the region comprising the Arab States and Latin America, and represent a first step for subregions in Asia and Europe.

V. Points for discussion

20. **The Statistical Commission is invited:**

(a) **To note the progress of PARIS 21 to date;**

(b) **To comment on its future direction and forward programme for 2004-2006.**

Notes

The documents submitted to the Statistical Commission at its thirty-second session are available at http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/sc2001.htm.